



NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

THE NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT FY-2005

NCRC Membership:

Chair: Rosendo Trevino III, State Conservationist

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Assistant to the Chair: Rita Yarborough

New Mexico

Members:

Barbara Aflague, Public Affairs Specialist

Mongmong, Guam

Sharyn Alvarez, Federal Women's Program Manager

Beltsville, Maryland

Mary Baumann, District Conservationist

Ashley, North Dakota

Jason Bradshaw, Soil Conservationist

Cedar City, Utah

Thedis Crowe, Resource Conservationist

Bozeman, Montana

Alice F. Love, Farm Bill Specialist

Auburn, Alabama

Cory Lytle, Soil Conservationist

Caliente, Nevada

Oliver L. Miranda, District Conservationist

Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Noller Herbert, Tribal Relations Coordinator

Washington, D.C.

Rick R. Tafoya, RC&D Coordinator

Carroll, Iowa

Gary T. Watson, District Conservationist

Hope, Arkansas

Faye Williams, Secretary

Christiansted, Virgin Islands

Advisors:

Andrew Johnson, Director, Civil Rights Division

Karen Karlinchak, Director, Human Resources Division

Larry Holmes, Director Outreach Division

Jon Vrana, Program Analyst, Strategic & Performance Planning Division

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☆☆ Awards ☆☆☆

☆☆ The following 2005 award recommendations were approved by the Chief: ☆☆☆

☆☆ NCRC Individual Award: ☆☆☆

☆☆ Lindsay Carter, RC&D Coordinator ☆☆☆

☆☆ New Hampshire ☆☆☆

☆☆ NCRC Team Award: ☆☆☆

☆☆ Legislative Affairs Staff ☆☆☆

☆☆ Washington, D.C. ☆☆☆

☆☆ Chief's Workforce Diversity Manager Award: ☆☆☆

☆☆ Allen Green, State Conservationist ☆☆☆

☆☆ Colorado ☆☆☆

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NCRC FY 2005 Meetings:

1. December 7-9, 2004
Las Vegas, NV.

2. March 29-31, 2005
Fresno, CA.

3. August 9-11, 2005
Wichita, KS.

2004 National Tribal Districts Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada.



Mission:

The Bylaws of the NRCS National Civil Rights Committee (NCRC) state that the committee shall serve as an advisor to the Chief, NRCS. As such, the committee serves four functions:

1. Advises the Chief to promote and assist in meaningful and effective affirmative action consistent with the goals and objectives set forth by management.
2. Provides feedback on the agency performance in EEO & CR compliance, identifying areas of weakness and making recommendations for improvement.
3. Identifies emerging areas needing special attention of the Chief and top management.
4. Makes recommendations to the Chief on policy, practices and procedures as they affect EO/CR agency wide.

The Committee is an impartial advisory body to the Chief made up of employees from throughout the agency and is diverse in grade level, job series, racial/ethnic background, and geographic region. The chair of the committee is appointed by the Chief and reports directly to the Chief. The Civil Rights Division Director and the Human Resources division Director serve the committee in an advisory capacity.

Focus: The NCRC continued its focus on accountability in FY05. The Committee has identified trends in issues which are brought before the Committee by the field for action. The NCRC worked diligently in following up on recommendations it has made to NRCS Division and Staff Directors to ensure action is taken. The significant concerns raised included: 1) the continuing concern with inaccurate PR RSNO/Parity data, 2) concerns of discrimination against specific ethnic groups and 3) ensuring accessibility for employees and customers with disabilities.

The NCRC met with the California State Civil Rights Committee, August 2005.

The NCRC held their summer meeting in conjunction with the Asian Pacific Islander Employees Organization (APIO) and participated at the conference. The committee spent a great deal of time addressing the roles of the NCRC and evaluating whether or not the Committee is serving the agency's needs as well as the needs of the Chief.

The NCRC participated in the 2nd Nat'l Tribal Districts Conference during their December 2004 meeting.

The National Civil Rights Committee

FY-2005 Activities



NCRC members participated in the NRCS 2005 Asian Pacific Islander Organization's 7th Annual Training Conference in Wichita, Kansas. Outreach Director and NCRC Advisor, Larry Holmes, presented 5 API student scholarships during the APIO Banquet.

**"Outreach is
Everybody's Business"
Larry Holmes,
Director NRCS
Outreach Division**

Issues:

- 13 Issues were reviewed by the Committee
- 13 Issues were resolved by the Committee

Issues/Accomplishments

Customer service RSNOD data collection and reporting continues to be a challenge, but improvements have been made by NRCS in FY 2005. The complete population of SCIMS information for our active customers continues, but needs more work by our field staff. Program participation information for FY 2004 continues to be populated after program delivery directly through special PRS data entry screens. With the implementation and use of ProTracts, the race, gender, and ethnicity, and disability information of our program applicants and participants will be harvested directly from ProTracts and will both simplify data collection and improve data quality. Limited progress (EQIP, AMA, CSP, WRP) were available for entry into the Program Participation this year.

Efforts are on going to publish customer information and parity reports in PRS for FY 2005. Missing customer ethnicity information will continue to be a challenge for accurately calculating parity information.

Advisors

The NCRC continues to keep abreast of existing programs, activities and upcoming trends and receives reports at each meeting from the Director of Civil Rights, Director of Human Resources, Director of the Outreach Division, and the Strategic & Performance Planning Division.

Fact Sheets

The committee recommended and received approval to send out two Fact Sheets *32+ Ways to improve in EO and CR and Civil Rights Program Responsibilities for District/Designated Conservationists*. The Fact Sheets are now available on the NCRC Web Site.

Positive Steps for Overcoming Specific Barriers and Increasing Conservation Program Participation by Target Groups

The 2002 Farm Bill identifies four specific groups (Limited Resources Farmers and Ranchers; American Indian and Alaska Native Farmers and Ranchers; Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers; and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers), recognizing the assistance they need to practice conservation on lands they own or manage. The intent of this document is to assist in identifying barriers to program participation by individuals within these groups and provide ideas to overcome these barriers. The State and field staffs should identify additional barriers for their particular area and develop specific methods and techniques to overcome these barriers.

The NCRC revisited an analysis to continue overcoming specific barriers and increase conservation program participation by target groups to try to assess progress being made to overcome these BARRIERS. This information was shared with NHQ to assist in these efforts.

Committee Members Visit NRCS Outreach Projects in California's San Joaquin Valley

Right: Producer, Will Scott describes his vegetable farm operation and the assistance small producers received from NRCS employees in establishing the African-American Farmers of California.



Right: NCRC member, Rick Tafoya, discusses the popularity of the Hmong Community Garden Project with Mila Lee during the spring NCRC meeting in Fresno, California.



Above (left to right): California State Conservationist, Lincoln E. Burton, Will Scott, and NCRC Chair, Rosendo Trevino III.



Above and Right: Students share USDA internship experiences with committee members during their stop at California State University, Fresno. NCRC also toured Reedly College, a Hispanic Serving Institution near Reedly, California.

